BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS

Service BC
Ministry of Labour & Citizens' Services

Infoline

Contact: bcstats.infoline@gov.bc.ca Issue: 07-06 February 9th, 2007

- **BC's unemployment rate fell to 4.3% in January, the lowest level since at least 1976**
- **Housing starts were up 15.0% in January**
- **The value of building permits experienced double-digit growth for the fifth straight year**

Labour Force

- **BC's unemployment rate dropped to 4.3% (*seasonally adjusted*) in January, the lowest level on record since January 1976, the first year for which provincial data are available.** Employment increased by a 1.4% (+31,700 workers), which was more than enough to absorb the 0.5% increase in the size of the labour force. The participation rate remained relatively stable in January (+0.2 percentage points), with 66.4 % of the working age population (15 and older) in the labour market. British Columbians continue to enjoy one of the best job markets in the country. Together, BC and Alberta (where there were more than 55,000 jobs) accounted for 63% of the increase at the national level.

  Among the provinces, British Columbia had one of the lowest unemployment rates, with Saskatchewan (4.1%), and Alberta (3.3%) having slightly lower rates. The national rate was 6.2%.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Both the goods and service sectors recorded strong growth in January.** Employment in the goods sector increased by 2.1% (*seasonally adjusted*). Increases were seen in three major industries: forestry, fishing & mining (+8.9%), construction (+3.4%) and manufacturing (+0.8%). At the same time, employment was down in utilities (-15.1%) and agriculture (-1.4%).

  The service sector recorded a more moderate increase in employment (+1.2%) as job growth in some industries was offset by declines in others. Employment in information, recreation and culture (+7.6%) and accommodation, food & beverage service (+5.3%) took on a significant number of workers. However, finance, insurance, real estate & leasing slipped 6.8%.

  The number of private sector jobs increased 2.5%, while public sector employers took on 0.3% more workers. Both men (+2.2%) and women (+0.6%) benefited from the January job growth. Part-time employment was up 2.4%, and 1.2% for full-time employment.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

The Economy

- **Housing starts in the province jumped 15.0% (*seasonally adjusted*) in January, following two months of declines.** With the exception of PEI (-16.7%) and Newfoundland (+0.0%), starts were up in all provinces. Canadian starts climbed 17.3%, with increases ranging from 3.7% in Quebec to a whopping 107.9% in Manitoba.

  Data Source: CMHC

- **New home construction in BC is forecasted to decline (-4.8%) in 2007 and drop a further 6.9% in 2008.** Despite the predicted decreases, housing starts will remain high in comparison to levels from previous years. Due in part to the continued popularity of urban living, multi-family starts are anticipated to ease only slightly (-3.4%) this year, while construction of single-detached homes is expected to drop off more substantially (-6.7%). Across the country, mortgage carrying costs are predicted to rise in the next couple of years due to higher house prices as well as increases in interest rates.

  Data Source: CMHC

- **Relative to the same month of 2005, the cost of new housing in BC's largest city continued to climb in December.** Home builders in Vancouver received an average of 8.2% more for their projects, while Victoria's housing price index was unchanged (+0.1%). Rising land value (+4.6%) in the capital city managed to offset a decline in new housing prices (-3.1%). On the other hand, the increase in the cost of houses in Vancouver

Report The Federal Immigration Plan for 2006

Did you know...

92% of British Columbians rate the quality of life in their community positively. Affordability and level of crime are among factors deemed most important when choosing where to live.

Source: BC Real Estate Association

(+12.5%) continued to outpace that of land (+0.7%).

Nationally, the new housing price index rose 10.7% during the twelve-month period ending in December. Residents of Calgary (+42.4%) and Edmonton (+41.5%) faced by far the biggest increases. With the exception of Windsor (-1.2%), all 21 metropolitan areas surveyed showed increases in the cost of buying a new home.

Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **Following a record month, the value of building permits issued by BC municipalities retreated (-40.2%, *seasonally adjusted*) in December.** Declines were recorded in the value of residential permits issued (-30.9%) while drop-offs in the industrial (-64.7%), commercial (-56.5%) and institutional (-51.2%) sectors pushed planned spending on non-residential projects down 56.2%.

  In Victoria, permits slipped 5.0%, while Abbotsford (-70.7%) and Vancouver (-55.1%) experienced more substantial decreases.

  Nationally, permits dropped 7.8% with declines in other provinces ranging from -7.3% in PEI to -60.6% in Newfoundland. Ontario (+0.2%), Alberta (+5.5%), Quebec (+14.2%) and Nova Scotia (+26.3%) were the only provinces to see an increase in the value of building permits in the last month of 2006. *Data Source: Statistics Canada*

2006 in Review

- **The value of building permits issued in BC amounted to $11.5 billion in 2006.** This represents a jump of 13.2% over 2005 and the sixth straight year of double-digit growth. The last time the province experienced more than five consecutive years of increased value in building permits was exactly 30 years prior (from 1971 to 1976).

  Last year, the non-residential sector (+21.9%) fuelled the construction boom as year-over-year growth in residential building permits (+9.2%) was significant, but more modest.

  Nationally, planned spending was up 9.0% in 2006 with growth in the non-residential (+14.5%) sector outpacing that of residential buildings (+5.9%). Building intentions reached record highs in every province except PEI (-15.2%) and Ontario (-3.7%), which were also the only two to post declines from 2005. If Alberta and BC had been excluded, the national value of building permits would have increased by just 1.0%.

  Data Source: Statistics Canada

- **During 2006, the value of building permits issued rose in many areas of the province, with the strongest gains made in two of the least populated regions.** Building intentions were up most substantially in North Coast (+57.0%) and Northeast (+35.0%), where planned spending for residential and commercial buildings soared. Vancouver Island/Coast (+16.8%) and Mainland/Southwest (+16.5%) also saw double-digit increases, while growth in the Kootenay region (+8.8%) was comparatively moderate. Thompson/Okanagan (-0.6%), Cariboo (-14.3%) and Nechako (-28.9%) were the only regions to see a downturn in building intentions last year.

  In Greater Vancouver, the total value of annual building permits reached $6.6 billion (+17.0% over 2005), and Victoria (Capital Region District) issued $780 million in permits, an 8.3% increase over 2005. *Data Source: Statistics Canada & BC Stats*

Education

- **Financial constraint is not the only factor contributing to lower university attendance among Canadian youth from lower-income families.** In 2003, less than a third (31%) of 19-year-olds from families in the bottom 25% of the income distribution had attended university, compared to half (50%) of young people from the top of the income distribution. Approximately 84% of the income divide in university participation in 2003 was attributable to variation in characteristics of youth from different backgrounds, while only 12% was the result of financial constraint. Variable characteristics of youth from different economic backgrounds include parents' level of education, parental expectation, student academic performance and high school attended. Of course, many of these characteristics may themselves be directly impacted by family income.

  Data Source: SC, Cat # 11-015-XIE

***Infoline** Issue: 07-06*
February 9th, 2007

Infoline Report

Issue: 07-06
Feb. 09, 2007

Contact: Sarah Harrower (250) 387-0334
Originally published in *Immigration Highlights* Issue 06-3. Annual subscription $30 +GST

A Summary of the Federal Immigration Plan for 2006

Each year, the Federal Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) announces annual planning levels in its Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration. This plan includes targets for admissions for New Permanent Residents by Immigration Class and information on target achievements over the past year. These planning levels, however, do not include visitors, international students, or those admitted under the foreign workers program. This special feature article summarizes the 2006 issue of this plan and discusses recent trends in international immigration to B.C.

Canada's Immigration policy has three broad aims: family reunification; economic development; and humanitarian concerns. As the pressures faced by the Government under these categories change, Canada adjusts the target levels for admissions. In the past several years, Canada has steadily increased its total planning levels, with the increases falling under those areas viewed to have the greatest immediate need.

General Review

Table 1 presents information from the 2005 and 2006 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration by CIC. Federal immigration plans for 2005 to 2007, the actual number of landings in 2005 and actual landings up to October 1st 2006 are listed.

In 2005 actual admissions exceeded their target ranges under all class of immigrants. As explained in the Annual Plan 2006, the higher admissions were a result of policy changes and changes in landing rates.

1. Higher allowances were made in the skilled worker category to help meet regional labor force needs in Canada. These labor force demands also affected landing rates in 2006 and plans for 2007.

2. In 2005, a policy change towards increased emphasis on family reunification for parents and grand-parents was made. This change was also incorporated into the 2006 and 2007 planning levels.

3. Finally, there were changes in landing rates in 2005. A greater number of new permanent residents who had been issued visas in 2004 arrived in 2005. Further, a larger number arrived sooner than anticipated after being issued their visa in 2005, and fewer individuals chose not to use their visa after being issued one.

These factors all resulted in higher admissions than originally planned in 2005.

Economic Class

Economic Immigrants have historically accounted for approximately 60 per cent of all landings to Canada. In 2005, the number of landings under the Economic Class exceeded planning levels. The planning range was set at 132,000–148,000 new permanent residents, but 156,310 individuals landed. This increase was largely a result of higher labor market demands for skilled workers, but the Business Immigrants and Live-in Caregiver categories exceeded their targets as well. A total of 30,199 economic immigrants arrived in British Columbia in 2005, representing 67.4 per cent of all landings to the province in that year.

The planning range for the Economic Class in 2006 was slightly lower than in 2005 at 126,000–143,000 individuals. To date 111,413 have landed in Canada, 20,717 in B.C. This B.C. total accounts for 18.6 per cent of the total economic class landings to Canada for 2006 thus far.

For 2007 the target range for the Economic Class were increased to 141,000–158,000 individuals in response to the continuing demand pressures in regional labor markets. The majority of this increase fell to the Skilled Worker category.

Family Class

The target range under the Family Class has increased steadily since the 2005 plan. Under this class 63,352 new permanent residents landed in Canada in 2005, well above the target range of 51,500–56,800 individuals. In total, 24.2 per cent of all landings in 2005 fell under this category. This increase was largely a result of a policy emphasis on the Parents and Grandparents category. This policy change also increased this category's target ranges for 2006 and 2007 to 17,000–19,000 and 18,000 - 19,000 individuals, respectively.

Under the Spouses / Partners / Children and Other category 8,639 new permanent residents landed in B.C. in 2005. This accounted for approximately 17 per cent of total admissions to Canada in this category. A further 3,081, or 25 per cent of immigrants into Canada under the Parents and Grandparents category, landed into BC as well.

The target range for the overall Family Class was between 61,000 and 65,000 for 2006. From January to September 2006, 53,546 new permanent residents landed in Canada under this class, with 18.9 per cent landed in British Columbia.

The planned range of admissions for the Family Class for 2007 was increased slightly to 67,000–69,000 persons. This reflects the higher allowance for parents and grandparents as well as a slight increase for the spouses and immediate family category.

Protected Persons and Other Classes

The Protected Persons and Other Classes include Government Assisted and Privately Sponsored Refugees, Protected Persons in Canada and Dependents Abroad, those admitted under Humanitarian and Compassionate Grounds and Permit Holders. Targets under these classes have remained relatively steady for the past three plans, with a slight increase for 2007.

In 2005, 42,574 new permanent residents landed in Canada under the Protected Persons and Other Classes. Of these landings, 6.7 per cent were in B.C. As of September 31st 2006, 28,216 Protected Class immigrants had landed in Canada; 1,864 of these chose BC as a place of residence.

The Canada level planning range for this class was set at 32,000 to 38,000 individuals for 2007.

Table 1: Permanent Residents Plan and Actual Admissions 2005 to 2007

	Canada 2005 Plan	Number Admitted 2005		Canada 2006 Plan	Number Admitted to Jan-Sept 2006		Canada 2007 Plan
		Canada	BC		Canada	BC	
Economic Class							
Skilled Workers †	112,500 to 124,500	130,242	21,810	105,000 to 116,000	86,197	13,593	116,000 to 128,000
Business Immigrants	9,500 to 10,500	13,469	6,520	9,000 to 11,000	10,003	4,616	9,000 to 11,000
Provincial / Territorial Nominees	8,000 to 10,000	8,047	789	9,000 to 11,000	10,226	1,399	13,000 to 14,000
Live-in Caregivers	2,500 to 3,000	4,552	1,080	3,000 to 5,000	4,987	1,109	3,000 to 5,000
Total Economic Class (incl. Dependents)	*132,500 to 148,000*	*156,310*	*30,199*	*126,000 to 143,000*	*111,413*	*20,717*	*141,000 to 158,000*
Family Class							
Spouses, Partners, Children and Others	46,000 to 50,000	50,881	8,639	44,000 to 46,000	37,034	6,598	49,000 to 50,000
Parents and Grandparents	5,500 to 6,800	12,471	3,081	17,000 to 19,000	16,512	3,523	18,000 to 19,000
Total Family Class	*51,500 to 56,800*	*63,352*	*11,720*	*61,000 to 65,000*	*53,546*	*10,121*	*67,000 to 69,000*
Protected Persons*							
Total Protected Persons	*30,800 to 33,800*	*35,768*	*2,156*	*32,800 to 40,200*	*21,336*	*1,217*	*25,900 to 30,800*
*Total Others***	*5,200 to 6,400*	*6,806*	*693*	*5,200 to 6,700*	*6,880*	*647*	*6,100 to 7,200*
Total	**220,000 to 245,000**	**262,236**	**44,768**	**225,000 to 255,000**	**193,164**	**32,700**	**240,000 to 265,000**

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration 2006* and *LIDS 2006Q3*

† Skilled Workers includes Skilled and Quebec Selected Skilled Workers

* Protected Persons include Government Assisted Refugees, Privately Sponsored Refugees, Protected Persons in Canada and Dependents Abroad.

** Others include Permit Holders and landings under Humanitarian and Compassionate grounds/Public Policy

Pre-conference Workshop

"Statistics for Market Analysis"

Through lectures, discussions, and a case study, workshop participants will learn how to incorporate statistics into business and economic planning. The workshop covers information about Statistics Canada data that you can use for market analysis and positioning in order to take advantage of business opportunities.

March 5, 2007 8:30am - 4:30pm
Workshop Fee: $95.00 + GST
(Not included in conference fee)
Register early, space is limited!

Welcome! Networking Reception & Entertainment

Featuring a live performance by Intellifunk - 2006 Canadian Aboriginal Music Awards Finalists for Best Blues Album and Best Group.

March 5, 2007 6:00pm - 9:00pm
Location: Victoria Conference Centre, 720 Douglas St.

Conference Accommodation

Until Feb 3/07, a special rate of **$90.00** per night is available at
The Fairmont Empress Hotel
721 Government Street
Victoria, BC
Toll free: 1-800-441-1414
Email: theempress@fairmont.com
For on-line reservations: quote GRTOL1
For phone reservations: quote TOOLS7

Exhibitor Booths & Trade Show

Space is available to promote your business or organization. For more information and rates, please contact conference registrar.

Statistics Canada will only use your information to complete the sales transaction, announce product updates and administer your account. From time to time, we may offer you other Statistics Canada products and services or ask you to participate in our market research. If you do not wish to be contacted again for promotional purposes ☐ and/or market research ☐ check as appropriate and fax or email this page to us, fax 604-666-6680, or email promotions@toolsforsuccess.ca.

TO REGISTER:

Please send your completed registration form to:
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REGISTRATION

This information will appear on your ID badge, please print clearly.

Name: _____

Title: _____

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Address: _____

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Pre-conference Workshop - Mar 5/07 $95 + GST $_____

Conference - March 6/07

Early Bird (before Feb 14/07)	$149 + GST
Regular Rate	$199 + GST
Group of 5 (before Feb 14/07) (attach list of names, titles and organizations)	$550 + GST $_____
TOTAL:	$_____

Method of Payment

Credit Card: ☐ VISA ☐ Mastercard ☐ AMEX

Card No: _____

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If paying by cheque or money order, please make payable to the "Receiver General of Canada" and enclose with your registration.

Cancellation Policy: The registration fee will be refunded (less a $75 administration charge) if written notice is received by Feb 14/07. After that date, no refund will be given.

Aussi disponible en français

Statistics Canada's Strategic Conference Series presents

TOOLS for SUCCESS:

Using Data in Aboriginal Communities

Victoria Conference Centre
720 Douglas St.
March 6, 2007
Victoria, B.C.

Hosted by:

Statistics Canada / Statistique Canada

BC STATS Service

Sponsored by:

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada / Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

Human Resources and Social Development Canada / Ressources humaines et Développement social Canada

AGENDA

Monday, March 5th, 2007

Pre-conference Workshop

8:30am - 4:30pm	**Pre-conference Workshop "Statistics for Market Analysis"**

Reception & Entertainment

5:00pm - 7:00pm	**Conference Registration Opens**
6:00pm - 9:00pm	**Reception & Live Performance by Intellifunk**

Tuesday, March 6th, 2007

Conference Agenda & Exhibits

7:00am - 8:00am	**Conference Registration Opens**
8:00am - 5:00pm	**Exhibits Open**
8:00am - 8:45am	**Continental Breakfast**
8:45am - 9:30am	**Welcome & Opening Remarks**
9:30am - 10:30am	**Plenary Session**
10:30am - 10:50am	**Break**
10:50am - 12:00pm	**Breakout Session I**
12:00pm - 1:30pm	**Luncheon & Keynote Speaker** *Chief Clarence Louie, Osoyoos Indian Band*
1:30pm - 2:45pm	**Breakout Sesson II**
2:45pm - 3:00pm	**Break**
3:00pm - 4:15pm	**Breakout Session III**
4:15pm - 4:45pm	**Summary & Closing Remarks**

SPEAKERS

Social & Community Development

- **Dan Beavon**, Indian & Northern Affairs Canada
- **Lauren Brown**, Xaaynangaa Naay Skidegate Health Centre
- **Linda Day**, BC Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environment
- **Eric Guimond**, Indian & Northern Affairs Canada
- **Cheryl Matthew**, Centre for Native Policy & Research
- **Marie Patry**, Statistics Canada
- **Gwen Phillips**, Ktunaxa Nation
- **Michael Sadler**, First Nations Social Development Society
- **Christa Williams**, First Nations Education Steering Committee

Economic Development

- **Chief Ron Ignace**, Skeetchestn Band
- **Grand Chief Ed John**, National Aboriginal Economic Development Board
- **André Le Dressay**, Fiscal Realities Economists
- **Chief Clarence Louie**, Osoyoos Indian Band

Labour Market Development

- **Keith Conn**, Human Resources & Social Development Canada
- **Keith Henry**, Métis Nation of BC
- **Zeno Krekic**, Skeena Native Development Society

Breakout sessions will take place during the conference. Conference registrants will be asked to indicate their session preferences at the time of conference registration. Conference organizers will do our best to accommodate all requests, however, we reserve the right to limit the number of people attending any one session based on room capacity.

Aussi disponible en français

What is the conference about?

Join us as leaders and experts from Aboriginal, academic, business, community, and government organizations share their best practices, experiences, success stories and challenges using data for planning and decision-making.

Conference features:

- Pre-conference workshop *"Statistics for Market Analysis"*
- Keynote speaker: ***Chief Clarence Louie, Osoyoos Indian Band***
- Plenary and breakout sessions

Who should attend?

Do you work in an Aboriginal social, community, or economic development field? Leaders, managers and planners need to make decisions that address the needs of today and prepare for the challenges of the future. The ability to use data to understand trends and project impacts is critical to effective strategic planning and decision-making. As well, this conference is a great learning and networking opportunity for those seeking ideas and information on how to use data effectively.

Conference Artwork

Eagle Welcome was created by Alano Edzerza of the Tahltan Nation (Raven Clan). Eagle Welcome was inspired by the idea of celebrating Aboriginal people walking in both worlds.

www.toolsforsuccess.ca

Infoline

February 9, 2007
Issue 07-06

fax transmission information service from **BC STATS**

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also on the Internet at **www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca**

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Oct 1/06	% change on one year ago
BC	4,327.4	1.2
Canada	32,730.2	1.0
GDP and INCOME (Revised Nov 8)	2005	% change on one year ago
(BC - at market prices)		
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *($ millions)*	168,855	7.2
GDP *($ 1997 millions)*	145,501	3.7
GDP *($ 1997 per Capita)*	34,173	2.4
Personal Disposable Income *($ 1997 per Capita)*	20,983	2.4
TRADE ($ millions, seasonally adjusted)		% change on prev. month
Manufacturing Shipments - Nov	3,478	-1.5
Merchandise Exports - Nov	2,576	-7.0
Retail Sales - Nov	4,403	-1.5
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX	% change on one year ago	12-month avg % change
(all items - Dec 2006)		
BC	2.1	1.8
Vancouver	2.6	1.9
Victoria	1.5	1.6
Canada	1.6	2.0
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)	Jan '07	% change on prev. month
(seasonally adjusted)		
Labour Force - BC	2,352	0.5
Employed - BC	2,250	1.4
Unemployed - BC	102	-16.7
		Dec '06
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	4.3	5.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	6.2	6.1
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Feb 7/07	Feb 8/06
Prime Business Rate	6.00	5.25
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	6.50	5.85
- 5 year	6.65	6.45
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Feb 7/07	Feb 8/06
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.1852	1.1536
US $ *(reciprocal of the closing rate)*	0.8440	0.8696
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGE RATE	Jan '07	% change on one year ago
(industrial aggregate - dollars)		
BC	743.37	3.2
Canada	732.40	1.9

SOURCES:

Population, Gross Domestic Product, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Wage Rate } Statistics Canada

Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

For latest Weekly Financial Statistics see www.bankofcanada.ca

Register now!

***Tools for Success**: Using Data in Aboriginal Communities* is a conference where leaders and experts from Aboriginal, academic, business, community, and government organizations share their best practices, experiences, success stories and challenges using data for planning and decision-making.

March 5-6, 2007
Victoria Conference Centre

www.toolsforsuccess.ca/home_eng.aspx

Maps on-line (2006 Census Geography)

Maps of even the smallest geographic units for which numerous census characteristics will be produced are now available free.

www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/geo/index.cfm

Guide to the BC Economy & Labour Market

In response to requests from users of the interactive web site, the *Guide* is now also available in PDF format.

www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/pubs/econ_gui.asp

Released this week by BC STATS

- Quarterly Regional Statistics, 4th Quarter 2006
- Labour Force Statistics, January 2007
- Earnings & Employment Trends, January 2007

Next week

- Tourism Sector Monitor, January 2007
- Exports, December 2006

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